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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM USDEL GRENADA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0094

C O N F I D E N T I A L GRENADA 0082

FOR THE SECRETARY, ARA - AMBASSADOR TODMAN

FROM USDEL OASGA

USOAS DEL 61

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, OAS
SUBJ: RESPONSE TO GUATEMALAN STATEMENT ON BELIZE

1. COMMITTEE I HELD FINAL SESSION AFTERNOON JUNE 22 TO HEAR COMMENTS OF AMBASSADORS PITTY (PANAMA) AND MCINTYRE (TRINIDAD/TOBAGO) IN LENGTHY STATEMENT OF GUATEMALAN POSITION ON BELIZE WHICH AMB CASTILLO ARRIOLA HAD READ AT MORNING SESSION.

2. MCINTYRE, IN A RAMBLING INTERVENTION, EXPRESSED TRIDIDAD'S SOLIDARITY WITH BELIZE. DESCRIBING BELIZE AS A TURKEY WHICH A MEMBER STATE WISHED TO CARVE, HE SAID TRINIDAD STOOD FOUR-SQUARE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION FOR BELIZE. HE SAID BELIZE'S PROBLEMS WITH GUATEMALA COULD BE INCLUDED LOGICALLY UNDER THE CENTRAL THEME OF THIS OASGA: HUMAN RIGHTS AND TERRORISM. THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE WAS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT, BUT THE GUATE-MALAN GOVERNMENT WAS PERPETRATING TERROR AGAINST A WHOLE
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PEOPLE BY MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO ACCEPT THE OFFER OF INDEPENDENCE FROM BRITIAN. MCINTYRE CHARAC-TERIZED CASTILLO ARRIOLA'S STATEMENT AS A TEDIOUS HISTORY WHICH EVINCED A COLONIA PAST. HE NOTED THAT EVERY STATE IN THE HEMISPHERE HAD BOUNDARY PROBLEMS -- THAT MEXICO WAS NOT GOING TO REOPEN OLD SORES REGARDING BELIZE -- AND SUGGESTED ESTABLISHING AN INTER-AMERICAN CLAIMS

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COMMISSION TO DEFUSE TERRITORIAL DISPUTES. HE ALSO MADE A NUMBER OF REFERENCES TO THE SPECIAL POSITON OF THE CARIBBEAN STATES IN THE OAS AND MADE CLEAR THAT HE CONSIDERED BELIZE PART OF THEIR GROUP. HE ASKED THE OTHER MEMBERS WHEHTER THEY WANTED THE OAS TO BE IN CONFLICT WITH THE UN ON SUCH IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES AS SELF-DETERMINATION AND UNIVERSALITY OF MEMBERSHIP.

3. PITTY FOLLOWED BY NOTING THAT THE OAS WAS FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL AND THAT NUMEROUS MYTHS WERE FALLING IN THE PROCESS, INCLUDING THE EXISTENCE OF A MAJORITY IN FAVOR OF CONTINUING TO INVESTIGATE THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN CUBA. HE SAID THAT PANAMA SUPPORTED THE ARGENTINE CLAIM TO THE ISLAS MALVINAS BUT THAT THAT CASE SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH BELIZE, WHICH HAD NEVER BEEN OCCUPIED BY THE SPANISH. PITTY DESCRIBED THE ORIGIN OF THE GUATEMALAN CLAIM TO BELIZE IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS: BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T BUILD ME A HIGHWAY, I WANT THE COUNTRY. HE SIAD THE GUATEMALAN POSITION WAS PATENTLY ABSURD AND EVINCED A LACK OF SERIOUSNESS TO NEGOTIATE. PITTY FOUND JUSTICE TO BE CLEARLY ON THE SIDE OF BELIZE WHICH COULD NOT ENTER THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF THREATS FROM GUATEMALA.

4. PITTY ALSO TOOK EXCEPTION TO CASTILLO ARRIOLA'S EARLIER SUGGESTION THAT PANAMA HAD USED VIOLENCE IN INTERNATIONAL
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FORA, NOTING THAT GUATEMALA HAD LENT ITS TERRITORY TO PREPARTATIONS FOR THE BAY OF PIGS INVASION, AND HE SUGGESTED THAT GOOD RESULTS HAD ALREADY COME FROM PANAMA'S BREAKING WITH GUATEMALA OVER BELIZE. HE NOTED THAT THE CANAL TALKS HAD BEEN GOING BETTER WITH THE UNITED STATES EVER SINCE. REFERRING TO THE STATEMENTS MADE BY FONMIN GONZALEZ REVILLA AND SECRETARY VANCE IN THE INFORMAL DIALOGUE, HE SAID THAT OUR COUNTRIES WERE WORKING ON A NEW TREATY WHICH WOULD GIVE PANAMA JURISDICTION OVER THE LANDS AND WATERS IT WANTED AND OTHERWISE RECOGNIZE ITS SOVEREIGN PREROGATIVES.

5. CASTILLO ARRIOLA RESPONDED IN A CONCILIATORY TONE, SAYING HE HAD PRESENTED THE POSITION OF THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT FOR IT TO BE JUDGED BY EACH OF THOSE PRESENT. HE DENIED THAT THE EXERCISE OF A RIGHT WAS A THREAT TO ANYONE.
MCGEE

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